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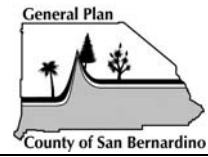
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5.1 PURPOSE OF THE ELEMENT AND BACKGROUND REPORT

The purpose of this background report is to provide an analysis of the location, ownership, and types of publicly owned lands that provide open space in San Bernardino County. This report also offers a discussion of public and private recreational opportunities, such as public parks, and passive and active recreation opportunities that make important contributions to the County's quality of life. It also includes resources of outstanding cultural, scenic, or visual quality. This Background Report will provide a guide for the preparation of the County's Open Space Element, which provides goals and policies for the long-range preservation and conservation of open space. Open space is defined as areas of outstanding scenic value, areas suited for park and recreation purposes, areas that serve as links between major recreation, and open space reservations, and areas that provide habitat for wildlife resources. The County also includes vast areas of open land that is suited not only for open space uses but also agriculture, grazing, mining, and the managed production of resources (e.g., timber harvesting) that are addressed in the Conservation element. Much of the open space land is included in areas managed by the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the National Park Service (NPS).

Separate background report sections address open space resources, all of which are incorporated into this background report by reference. These sections can be found in the Conservation Background Report (Biological Resources-Section 6.3.1, Cultural Resources-Section 6.3.2, Soils and Agriculture-Section 6.3.5, and Minerals-Section 6.3.6); the Land Use Background Report (Existing Land Uses-Section 1.3.2, and Federal Plans and Programs-Section 1.3.8); and the Safety Background Report (Geology-Section 7.3.1, Flood/Hydrology/Drainage-Section 7.3.2, Fire-Section 7.3.3, and Hazardous Waste-Section 7.3.6).

5.1.1 INTRODUCTION

San Bernardino County possesses a wide variety of recreational opportunities and vast expanses of scenic vistas. This is attributable to its immense size and spatial relationship to major natural features found only in the southwestern portion of the United States. The County encompasses approximately 20,106 square miles (52,072 square kilometers). Nearly 80 percent of the County land is held in federal ownership and is administrated by several different federal agencies. Approximately 90 percent of the County is desert, and the remainder consists of valley and mountain areas (San Bernardino County, 2002). Most of these features are relatively new in terms of geologic time frames creating the prominent, and complex landscape features that are visible today. Vast areas continue to exist with few signs of man's intrusion.

The climate is predominantly arid but contains areas of a mixed terrain climate along with alpine conditions in areas above 5,000 feet in elevation. The open vegetative cover of native desert and valley flora provides for magnificent views from the many valley floors. This contrasts sharply with the mixed coniferous and alpine plant communities found in the mountainous regions of the County (San Bernardino County, 1989).

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From 1980 to 2000, the County's population has increased from 919,700 to 1,709,434, which is an approximate 86 percent growth increase in twenty years (San Bernardino County, 2002). According to the California Department of Finance, San Bernardino County's projected population by 2020 will be 2,800,900, which is an estimated 64 percent increase from the year 2000 (California Department of Finance, 2001). Constant, and relatively high increases in population growth in the past, have resulted in urban development and increased demand for available land. The Open Space Element of the General Plan provides a reference to guide the protection and preservation of open space, recreation, and scenic areas, while accommodating future growth within the County.

5.1.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This background report provides information regarding the County's open space, recreational, and scenic resources that are regulated by federal, state, and local jurisdictions. Although several other County technical reports are described in the context of desert, mountain, and valley regions, this technical report is not because the resources are more regional in nature. Some major resource areas cross over to different planning regions, and therefore, they are described separately with their locations depicted on appropriate figures. Resources include designated wilderness areas, forests, regional parks, and designated scenic corridors. Research for this portion of the report was compiled by reviewing existing documents and internet resources, and through agency contacts and interviewing individuals as provided in the Bibliography. Agencies contacted included the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Forest Service, BLM, and the NPS. State and local agencies included the State Parks and Recreation Department, the San Bernardino County Land Use Scenarios and Regional Parks departments, and the Special Districts Department.

5.2 IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC CONCERNS

Several community meetings were held throughout the County to identify unique community amenities, issues, and solutions regarding open space, recreation, and scenic resources. Most communities indicated that their proximity to wilderness areas, open space, nature and wildlife, and recreation opportunities are factors that make them unique. These factors place an increased importance of these amenities in determining a high quality of life. Issues are identified by open space, recreation, and scenic resources and are geographically categorized between Valley, Mountain, and Desert communities. Valley communities include Ontario, Bloomington, Devore, Redlands and Oak Glen/Montone/Crafton; Mountain communities include Twin Peaks and Big Bear Lake; and Desert communities include Trona, Yucca Mesa, Newberry Springs, Phelan, and Baker.

5.2.1 OPEN SPACE

Valley – Open space concerns in the valley communities of the County include preservation of the Etiwanda Preserve and contiguous areas of open space despite encroachment of cities. The valley communities discussed their interests in developing a multiple species habitat conservation plan and opportunities to restore the San Bernardino Forest.

Mountain – The primary open space issues in the Mountain communities of the County are intrusion of development and infrastructure into forest and the need for a tree preservation ordinance.

Desert – The desert communities expressed concerns of economic development as a threat to the following factors: rural lifestyle; the preservation and conservation of wildlife corridors, wilderness areas, wildlife habitat; and the need for conservation incentive programs.

5.2.2 RECREATION

Valley – Recreational concerns in the valley communities of the County include lack of opportunities for concerts, off-road activities, races, and places that provide activities for youth. Residents indicated the need for more parks and open space, trails along the foothills, and bike riding areas. Additionally, residents of the valley communities have indicated their desire for the County Regional Parks to be returned to a local park designation and limit the use of these parks to the local area inhabitants.

Mountain – Mountain community residents want to provide recreation access to roads, trails, and docks in the North Shore areas of Big Bear Lake.

Desert - Recreational concerns in the desert communities of the County focused mainly on designation and maintenance of trails for equestrian, bicycle, hiking, and OHV uses. Additionally, residents expressed the lack of recreational activities for children and the potential for park youth employment.

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5.2.3 SCENIC

Primary scenic concerns of County residents include the preservation of scenic views within the mountain communities and limits for development on ridge tops within the desert communities.

5.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

5.3.1 OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, PARKS, AND TRAILS

There is a variety of State and Federal agencies responsible for managing open space and recreational resources within the County. Federal and state open space recreational uses are depicted on [Figure 5-1](#).

5.3.1.1 FEDERAL AGENCIES¹

Two major federal agencies that are responsible for the stewardship of public lands for open space and recreational purposes include the BLM- Department of Interior and the USFS- Department of Agriculture.

Bureau of Land Management – Department of the Interior

The BLM is a federal agency, responsible for the management of public lands and resources on behalf of the American people. Congress directed that public lands be managed under the “principles of multiple use and sustained yield.” It is the mission of the BLM to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

The BLM administers approximately 15 percent, or 15,007,475 acres, of California’s public lands, of which 40 percent or 6,076,378 acres are located in the County (BLM 2003). Comparatively, San Bernardino County is approximately 20,105 square miles, or 12,870,080 acres, which equates to approximately 47 percent of the County’s land holdings managed by BLM.

The BLM manages Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), which have been identified as containing unique or limited natural features or habitat areas. Other BLM special management areas are Unusual Plant Associations (UPA) and Wilderness Study Areas (WSA).

California Desert Conservation Area Plan

The BLM has a district office in Riverside, and field offices located in Barstow and Needles. Through implementation of the California Desert Conservation Area Plan (CDCA), approved in 1980 as amended, the BLM determines the appropriate land usage for recreational, scenic, and open space opportunities, among others. The CDCA establishes a series of land use designations, which are directly correlated to the expected and intensity of uses. Higher intensity land uses include off-highway vehicles (OHV) and mining.

¹ More details can be found in Section 1.3.8 – Federal Plans and Programs of the Land Use Background Report.

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[Figure 5-1. Federal and State Open Space and Preserves](#)

The CDCA Plan sets forth four distinct multiple-use classes for their lands, along with other important features, such as ACECs, OHV corridors, and National Scenic Area. The four multiple use classes include:

- Multiple-Use Class C for the management of potential wilderness areas;
- Multiple-Use Class L (Limited Use) for sensitive, natural, scenic, ecological, and cultural resource values and lower-intensity uses;
- Multiple-Use Class M (Moderate Use) for controlled balance between higher intensity use and protection of public lands; and
- Multiple-Use Class I (Intensive Use) to provide for concentrated use of lands and resources to meet human needs.

Northern & Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan

A Record of Decision (ROD) signed by the BLM in December of 2002 approved the Northern & Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan (NECO). NECO is an amendment to the 1980 BLM CDCA Plan for the portion of lands that lies within the NECO planning area. The eight major plan amendment decisions set forth by NECO include:

- Establish Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth guidelines for grazing management;
- Establish two Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMA) encompassing about 1.75 million acres that are managed as ACECs for recovery of the desert tortoise;
- Establish the Southern Mojave and Sonoran Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMA) for bighorn sheep totaling over a million acres and 13 multi-species WHMAs totaling over a half million acres such that 80 percent of the distribution of all special status species and all natural community types are included in conservation management areas;
- Combine Herd Management Areas for wild horses and burros and adjust the Appropriate Management Levels (AML);
- Designate routes of travel (approximately 95% of existing routes will remain available for vehicle access);
- Identify priorities for potential acquisition of private lands and disposal of public lands;
- Provide access to resources for economic and social needs; and
- Incorporate 23 wilderness areas (totaling over a million acres) established by the 1994 California Desert Protection act in the CDCA (BLM 2002a).

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Northern & Eastern Mojave Desert Plan

A ROD signed by the BLM in December 2002 approves the Northern & Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan (NEMO), an amendment to the 1980 BLM CDCA Plan. The eight major plan amendment decisions set forth by NEMO include:

- Establish Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth guidelines for grazing management;
- Establish two DWMA's encompassing about 312,000 acres that are managed as ACECs for recovery of the desert tortoise;
- Establish the Amargosa River and Carson Slough ACECs in the Amargosa watershed for management of additional listed, endemic, and sensitive species in the planning area, and upgrade the multiple-use class and develop programmatic protection measures on an adjacent area with sensitive bat species;
- Eliminate the Clark mountain Heard management Area for wild horses and burros in the Ivanpah DWMA and adjust the AML from 44 to 0 throughout the herd area to provide for recovery of the desert tortoise. In the Chicago Valley Herd Management Area adjust the AML for wild horses and burros in the Amargosa watershed to reflect the current situation and prevent future impacts from the growth of herds on listed plants. AML for wild horses would be adjusted from 28 to 12 to maintain the current herd of animals, and AML for burros would be adjusted from 28 to 0;
- Establish six segments of rivers in the planning area as eligible for further suitability study for the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, including portions of the Amargosa River, Cottonwood Creek, and Surprise Canyon Creek;
- Designate routes of travel;
- Identify priorities for potential acquisition of private lands and disposal of public lands; and
- Incorporate 23 wilderness areas (totaling over a million acres) established by the 1994 California Desert Protection act in the CDCA (BLM 2002b).

West Mojave Habitat Conservation Plan and California Desert Conservation Plan Amendment

In 1992, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BLM and participating agencies was signed to initiate the West Mojave planning process. A result of the MOU was the West Mojave Habitat Conservation Plan and California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment (West Mojave Plan). The West Mojave Plan proposes to develop management strategies for the desert tortoise, Mojave ground squirrel, and over 100 other sensitive plants and animals that would conserve those species throughout the western Mojave Desert, while establishing a streamlined program for compliance with the regulatory requirements of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (BLM 2003b). The Draft EIS/EIR for the West Mojave Plan addresses alternative concepts for the protection of biological resources and is currently undergoing the California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act

(CEQA/NEPA) process (BLM 2003). Approval of this document would result in the most up to date resource management plan for the West Mojave region.

Wilderness Areas

The BLM operates and manages their lands under a variety of federal legislation, which affects the use of public lands, such as the Federal Land Management Policy Act (FLMPA) of 1976 and the California Desert Protection Act (CDPA) of 1994. The CDPA designated 69 wilderness areas in southern California and directed that they be administered by the BLM pursuant to the Federal Wilderness Act of 1964. Names and acreage size for all 28 designated wilderness areas in San Bernardino County are listed in Table 5-1, and are depicted on Figure 5-2 (Figure reflects both ACEC and BLM Wilderness Areas).

Table 5-1. Wilderness Areas In San Bernardino County

Wilderness Area	Acreage Size
Bigelow Cholla Garden	10,380
Bighorn Mountain	26,685
Black Mountain	13,940
Bristol Mountains	68,515
Cadiz Dunes	39,740
Chemehuevi Mountains	64,320
Cleghorn Lakes	33,980
Clipper Mountain	26,000
Dead Mountains	48,850
Golden Valley	37,700
Grass Valley	31,695
Hollow Hills	22,240
Kelso Dunes	129,580
Kingston Range	209,608
Mesquite	47,330
Newberry Mountains	22,900
North Mesquite Mountains	25,540
Old Woman Mountains	146,020
Pahrump Valley	74,800
Piute Mountains	36,840
Rodman Mountains	27,690
Saddle Peake Hills	1,440
San Geronio	37,980
Sheephole Valley	174,800
Stateline	7,050
Stepladder Mountains	81,600
Turtle Mountains	144,500
Whipple Mountains	77,520

Source: BLM Website 2003 (<http://www.ca.blm.gov>)

Section 4(c) of the Wilderness Act prohibits certain uses of wilderness areas. These prohibitions include commercial enterprise, permanent and temporary roads, use of motor vehicles, motorized

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equipment or motorboats, landing of aircraft, use of other forms of mechanical transport, and structures or installations. There are three classes of exceptions to some or all of the prohibitions.

Figure 5-2. Resource Designations

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These include private existing rights, actions necessary to meet the minimum requirements for the administration of the area, and special provisions related to livestock grazing established prior to designation.

U.S. Forest Services– Department of Agriculture

Under authority of the Department of Agriculture, the USFS manages the majority of federal lands within the mountain regions of the County. These are mostly located within the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests along the southwestern boundary of the County (See Figure 5-3). The San Bernardino National Forest has three Ranger Districts that manage the San Bernardino Mountains and a portion of the San Gabriel Mountains.

The San Bernardino National Forest covers over 671,686 acres, of which 456,928.12 acres are located within San Bernardino County. The Forest ranges in elevation from 2,000 feet on the valley floor to 11,502 feet at the top of Mount San Gorgonio. It contains many different habitats and over 440 species of wildlife (USFS, 2004). The Angeles National Forest covers over 650,000 acres, of which 10,352.42 acres are located within San Bernardino County. The Forest elevations range from 1,200 to 10,064 feet. Much of the Forest is covered with dense chaparral, that changes to pine and fir-covered slopes at higher elevations (USFS, 2004).

Forest Plans

The USFS is currently in the process of updating the Land and Resources Management Plans (Forest Plans), which describe the management of the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, and San Bernardino National Forests. This coordinated process is intended to achieve management direction in a consistent format across the four forests due to their common ecosystems and management challenges. An EIS is currently under preparation and will address several alternatives relating to the management of the four forests (USFS, 2004). The Cleveland and Los Padres forests are not within the boundaries of San Bernardino County and, therefore, are not discussed as a part of this General Plan.

In 1999, the Forest Supervisors determined that Forest Plan revisions were needed because significant changes had occurred in conditions and demands. Such changes include increases in species that are listed as threatened or endangered in the four forests, along with an increase in a variety of ongoing activities within the forests in the last decade. The following types of decisions will be made in the Forest Plans:

1. Establishment of forest-wide objectives, with a description of the desired condition;
2. Establishment of forest-wide management standards;
3. Establishment of management areas and management prescriptions;
4. Establishment of lands suitable for the production of timber;
5. Establishment of monitoring and evaluation requirements; and
6. Recommendations to Congress of areas eligible for wilderness or wild and scenic river designation.

Forest Plans do not make any decisions regarding site-specific project proposals for implementing the plan. Project level environmental analysis would still need to be completed and the project must be consistent with the adopted Forest Plan.

Federal Trails

The USFS administers the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), which is a wilderness trail approximately 2,650 miles long and extends from Mexico to Canada, through three western states. One Hundred and fifteen miles of the PCT passes through San Bernardino County via the Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area, located towards the southwest. It crosses twenty-four National Forests and seven National Parks. The PCT was included as a National Scenic Trail in the National Trails System Act passed by Congress in 1968.

National Park Service

The National Park Service promotes and regulates the use of national parks to conserve scenery and natural and historic objects for the use and enjoyment of future generations. The NPS manages three national parks within the County including Death Valley National Park, Mojave National Preserve, and Joshua Tree National Park. Only the Mojave National Preserve is entirely within the County boundaries. The northern portion of Joshua Tree National Park lies within San Bernardino while the remaining portion is within Riverside County boundaries. The southern portion of Death Valley National Park lies within San Bernardino while Inyo County houses the remaining portion. These national parks are described below and depicted on [Figure 5-1](#).

Mojave National Preserve

The Mojave National Preserve was designated in October 31, 1994 and was once known as the East Mojave National Scenic Area. Public law abolished the national scenic area designation and renamed it the Mojave National Preserve under the California Desert Protection Act. The Mojave National Preserve is approximately 1,531,832 acres in size and allows year-round public access to all of its information centers and ranger stations. The Preserve is located towards the County's eastern boundary between I-15 and I-40, and includes vast expanses of three major North American Deserts: the Mojave, Great Basin, and Sonoran. It spans the counties of Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino with the majority (1,372,623.46 acres) within San Bernardino County. The Preserve's unique ecology includes one of the largest and most dense Joshua tree forests, cactus gardens, and relict plant communities of white fir and chaparral. Local temperatures vary greatly by elevation, which ranges from 880 feet to 7,492 feet. Summer temperatures average 90 degrees with highs exceeding 105 degrees regularly. Precipitation also varies greatly across the Preserve; mountain areas average nearly 9 inches per year, while the average near Baker is only 3.37 inches. At least 25 percent of precipitation falls as localized summer monsoon thunderstorms (NPS 2004).

Joshua Tree National Park

The Joshua Tree National Park was designated as a National Monument in 1936, and a National Park in 1994. It is located towards the County's southern boundary between I-10 and Highway 62

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and incorporates lands in both San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Joshua Tree National Park is approximately 1,018,122 acres in size, of which 119,445.21 acres are within San Bernardino County. Year-round public access is allowed to all of its information centers, ranger stations, and museums. This National Park consists of two deserts, the Colorado Desert and the Mojave Desert. Below 3,000 feet, the Colorado Desert encompasses the eastern part of the park and features natural gardens of creosote bush, ocotillo, and cholla cactus. The higher, moister, and slightly cooler Mojave Desert is the special habitat of the Joshua tree. In addition to Joshua tree forests, the western part of the park also includes geologic displays rarely found in California's deserts. Five fan palm oases also dot the park, indicating those few areas where water occurs naturally and wildlife abounds (NPS 2004).

Death Valley National Park

The Death Valley National Park was designated a National Monument in February 1933, and a National Park in October, 1994. Death Valley National Park is approximately 3,340,410 acres in size and incorporates lands in both San Bernardino (214,218.98 acres) as well as Inyo Counties. Year-round public access is provided to all of its information centers, ranger stations, and museums. The Park is the lowest point in the Western Hemisphere and one of the hottest places in the world. Plant and animal species, some of which occur nowhere else in the world, have adapted to the harsh desert environment. Humans have adjusted to these severe conditions, as evidenced by extensive archeological sites; and historical sites related to successive waves of prospectors, miners, and homesteaders. Death Valley National Park includes all of Death Valley, a 156-mile-long north/south-trending trough that formed between two major block-faulted mountain ranges: the Amargosa Range on the east and the Panamint Range on the west. Telescope Peak, the highest peak in the Park and in the Panamint Mountains, rises 11,049 feet above sea level and lies only 15 miles from the lowest point in the United States in the Badwater Basin salt pan, 282 feet below sea level (NPS 2004).

5.3.1.2 STATE

State Parks and Recreation Department

The California State Parks and Recreation Department's mission is to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the State's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. The Department manages a number of public parks within the County pursuant to the Department's Strategic Plan, the Seventh Generation - The Strategic Vision of California State Parks (California State Parks and Recreation Department 2001). State parks within San Bernardino County include:

- **Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area (SRA)** – is located along Highway 138, approximately 20 miles north of San Bernardino via Highways 18 and 138. Silverwood Lake SRA includes the Pacific Crest Trail, which is a national scenic trail spanning 2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada. Approximately 2,000 acres in size, the Silverwood Lake SRA is open year-round, except for natural disasters such as fire and extreme rainfall. Activities

available within this SRA include, but are not limited to, trails for hiking and biking, camping, fishing, swimming, and organized exhibits and programs.

- **Providence Mountain State Recreation Area** – is located in the eastern Mojave Desert, approximately 56 miles from Needles on I-40, on the east side of Providence Mountain. Providence Mountain SRA is approximately 5,900 acres in size and is open year round. Activities available within this SRA include, but are not limited to, hiking, camping, and organized exhibits and programs. This SRA features a variety of cactus and yucca in creosote scrub habitat and is well known for Mitchell Caverns, which contains intricate limestone formations, the only ones found within the State Park System.
- **Chino Hills State Recreation Area** – is located off of SR-91 to Highway 71 North. This State Park encompasses 12,452 acres consisting of oaks, sycamores, and rolling grassy hills that stretch nearly 31 miles from the Santa Ana Mountains to the Whittier Hills. The Chino Hills SRA is open year-round and allows for such activities including, but not limited to, hiking, biking, horseback riding, and camping.
- **Wildwood Canyon** – is a new park within the State Park System, however it is not available for public use at this time.

5.3.1.3 LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

County Regional Parks Department

There are eight regional parks identified in the County, which are listed in Table 5-2. and depicted on (Figure 5-3).

Table 5-2. County Regional Parks

Regional Park	Recreational Activities	Location
Calico	480-acre old mining town, camping and cabins, variety of attractions and activities.	Northeast of Barstow, Ghost Town Road exit from I-15.
Moabi	1,100 acres for camping, fishing, boating, swimming, water activities.	Banks of the Colorado River, 11 miles southeast of Needles, California.
Prado	More than 2,000 acres for fishing, horseback riding, camping, picnics, golf, and shooting.	Highway 83, south of Highway 60 and north of Highway 91 in Chino.
Cucamonga-Guasti	150-acre day-use park allowing swimming, picnic activities, and use of world-famous vineyards.	Immediately north of I-10 on the Archibald Avenue exit near the Ontario Convention Center, Ontario Mills Mall, and Ontario International Airport.
Lake Gregory	150-acre park with year-round fishing, hiking, swimming, boating and picnic activities.	San Bernardino Mountains in the community of Crestline.
Glen Helen	1,340 acres for camping, hiking, swimming, fishing, and picnic activities. Glen Helen is the home of the Renaissance Pleasure Faire and Hyundai Pavilion.	Northern junction of I-15 and I-215.
Yucaipa	885 acres for camping, fishing, boating, swimming and other activities.	Foothills of San Bernardino Mountains at the I-10 and Yucaipa Boulevard exit.

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Regional Park	Recreational Activities	Location
Mojave Narrows	840 acres for fishing, boating, camping, hiking, and horseback riding along the ancient riverbed of the Mojave River.	I-15 and Bear Valley Road in Victorville.

Figure 5-3. County Regional and Community Parks

Other County Organizations and Self-Governed Districts

The County Special District Department provides local park and recreation facilities through the Community Service Districts (CSDs) and County Service Areas (CSAs). The Office of Special Districts manages the CSAs that are governed by the Board of Supervisors. The CSDs are self-governed districts, which receive funding from the Board of Supervisors. Monies for these districts are allocated based upon their service areas and revenues that are generated within the service area.

Other self-governed districts that oversee conservation areas within the County include the Nature Conservancy, the University of California, California Department of Fish and Game, and the Big Morongo Preserve Association.

5.3.2 SCENIC AREAS

San Bernardino County contains a myriad of scenic resources, which have been recognized by federal, state, and local jurisdictions as worthy of special protection to preserve their aesthetic value. Vast undeveloped areas and undisturbed scenic vistas within the County provide a significant scenic resource as they contrast against the developed urban areas. There are no designated wild and scenic rivers located in San Bernardino County.

5.3.2.1 SCENIC AREAS

Designated federal, state, and local open space and recreational areas offer scenic vistas and views if they are visible and provide a break from urban development. These areas include designated BLM Wilderness Areas.

5.3.2.2 SCENIC HIGHWAYS

Several roadways have been designated as scenic routes to recognize their visual quality in areas through which they pass. The USFS has also designated some portions of Highways 138, 18, and 38 as a Scenic Byway called the “Rim of the World Highway.” The BLM has also designated a number of roadways in remote desert areas as Back Country Byways, a designation which is intended to alert motorists to the scenic quality of these less-traveled routes. The Wild Horse Canyon Back Country Byway was designated as the Nation’s first Byway.

Some routes have also been designated as scenic by Caltrans. Other locally designated scenic routes are subject to additional land use and aesthetic controls of the County.

5.4 CRITICAL ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

Within the County there are a number of challenging issues related to the open space, recreation, and scenic resources. These include:

- Increasing urban sprawl due to population increases and economic growth. This results in loss of open space and more challenges in creating recreational opportunities and preserving the natural character of the scenic environment;
- Lack of funding to acquire land for conservation purposes and cutbacks in staff resources;
- Difficulties in negotiating reasonable conservation plans with state and federal agencies who have primary jurisdiction over these resources;
- Shifting priorities in response to recessionary economic conditions;
- 4-year drought-related vegetative mortality rates in the forest areas and increasing human population have resulted in the build-up of hazardous fuels and less controlled burning activities due to safety issues; and
- Dwindling habitat for wildlife and plants, including 40 threatened or endangered species, in the forests due to high numbers of visitors living within close proximity to the area.

5.5 REFERENCES AND RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

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5.5.3 GLOSSARY

The following definitions of open space, recreation, and parks are based on the San Bernardino County General Plan (San Bernardino County 2001).

Open Space: Areas of outstanding scenic value; areas suited for park and recreation purposes, and areas serving as links between major recreation and open space reservations. The County also includes vast areas of open land suited for required open space uses, including agriculture, grazing, mining, and the managed production of resources (e.g., timber harvesting). Much of this land is included in areas managed by the BLM, the USFS, and the NPS.

Recreation: Open space areas that offer visitors recreational activities such as hiking, camping, picnicking, skiing, and other similar types of activities.

Regional Park: Natural or multi-use areas designed to provide recreational opportunities for the entire community. May include such amenities as active recreation, picnicking, swimming, trail uses, and play areas.

Scenic areas: Areas that provide a vista of undisturbed natural areas. Including a unique or unusual feature that comprises an important or dominant portion of the viewshed, or an area that offers a distant vista that provides relief from less attractive views of nearby features.

5.5.4 ACRONYMS

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
AML	Appropriate Management Level
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CDCA	California Desert Conservation Act
CDPA	California Desert Protection Act
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CSA	County Service Area
CSD	Community Service District
DWMA	Desert Wildlife Management Area
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FLMPA	Federal Land Management Policy Act
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

OPEN SPACE

NECO	Northern & Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinate Management Plan
NEMO	Northern & Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NPS	National Park Service
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
PCT	Pacific Crest Trail
ROD	Record of Decision
SRA	State Recreation Area
UPA	Unusual Plan Associations
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
WHMA	Wildlife Habitat Management Area
WSA	Wilderness Study Areas